



April 2015

THE COURIER

Naval Medical Center Portsmouth, Portsmouth, Va.



Comfort Deploys; Stops in Belize — Pages 6-9

NFL Star Tackles Mental Health Stigma during Visit

By MC2 (SW) TERAH L. BRYANT
NMCP Public Affairs

Heisman Trophy Winner Herschel Walker spoke to hundreds of staff about the importance of seeking mental health assistance during a visit to Naval Medical Center Portsmouth, April 16. Walker's message: "There is no shame in getting help. I did."

NMCP's Suicide Prevention Team hosted the event to continue reducing the stigma associated with psychological issues that prevent individuals from seeking treatment. For nearly two hours, Walker shared his story and then offered autographs and posed for pictures with them. He concluded his visit by meeting with Marines from the Wounded Warrior Battalion-East Portsmouth Detachment.

Although Walker is known as a football legend, he is also well known for being diagnosed and seeking help for Dissociative Identity Disorder. He travels to military installations throughout the world talking with service members about the importance of speaking up, seeking help and inspiring hope.

Throughout his talks with service members over the years, Walker stated that being ashamed or afraid of the outcome were the main factors he's heard as the reason they don't seek help. Through efforts to eliminate the stigma, he's noticed that service members nowadays tell him they feel supported.

"The leadership within the military – you are talking about mental health and confronting it – that's what you should be



Photo by MCSN Juan A. Salinas-León

Herschel Walker speaks to Marines from the Wounded Warrior Battalion-East Portsmouth Detachment.

doing," Walker said. "The more you talk about it, the more people will become comfortable, and it's already hard to get help."

Walker explained that he didn't realize he had a problem until his wife said she was afraid of him.

"I never drank alcohol, did drugs or anything like that," Walker said. "I got to a point where I became this dangerous, terrible person, and I was fortunate to have my family to help me out."

When Walker arrived at the hospital for treatment, he said

— See NFL, Page 13



Photo by MC2 (SW) Terah L. Bryant

4DX Summit

Capt. Cynthia Kuehner, center, and representatives of the Directorate of Primary Care display the commander's trophy for the Four Disciplines of Execution summit.

See Page 4 to read the story.

Save the Date

VA Health Benefits Brief

The Veterans Affairs Health Benefits Brief is May 11 from 9 - 11 a.m. in the auditorium and is co-sponsored by the NMCP Mentorship Program.

Representatives from the Department of Veterans Affairs Hampton Veterans Medical Center will be on board to provide information about the health benefits that may be available to veterans.

Enrollment specialists will assist with registration and answer questions about eligibility. Active duty, retirees, veterans, spouses, families and loved ones of veterans are encouraged to attend. The presentation consists of information about accessing VA health care, the Affordable Care Act and the VA, returning warrior programs, online services, veteran's crisis line, service-related environmental exposure and more. Bring your questions about your VA Health Benefits.

Civil Service Retirement Seminar

The Human Resources Office is offering a Civil Service Retirement Seminar June 10 in the auditorium. All civil service employees are invited to attend, whether they are at the beginning, mid-point, or end of their career, and learn more about the retirement system.

FERS personnel: 8 - 11 a.m. CSRS personnel: 12:30 - 3:30 p.m. Plan to arrive at least 10 minutes prior to the start of the seminar. Spouses are welcome to attend.

There is no need to sign up. Employees may print out the PowerPoint presentation to bring with them. They are located on NMCP's intranet (HRO (Civil Service) /Retirement heading).

Park View Elementary Volunteer Opportunity

There are still opportunities to volunteer at Park View Elementary School. Volunteers can tutor, be a lunch buddies

mentor or help with end-of-year activities. For more information, contact Lt. Cmdr. Mark Edwards at mark.a.edwards2.mil@mail.mil or (757) 953-5735.

Upcoming Fleet and Family Support Center Workshops

Fleet and Family Support Center at NMCP is located in Bldg. 249 next to the Child Wait Center. Workshops are open to active duty, retirees, dependents and DoD civilians. Child care is available if arranged in advance. Call 953-7801 or email amanda.burba.ctr@navy.mil to register.

TSP – Your Key to Financial Independence

The Thrift Savings Plan workshop is May 12 from 2 - 3:30 p.m. TSP provides all service members with the opportunity to get an immediate tax break while saving for their and their family's future. Learn how to take advantage of this exciting government-sponsored savings and investment program to build wealth and achieve financial independence in this 90-minute workshop.

Retirement Planning

The Retirement Planning workshop is May 26 from 10 - 11:30 a.m. This single-session, interactive program introduces the basic concepts of financial retirement planning, including the military retirement system and the new Thrift Savings Plan. This is a must if you are leaving the military.

Oakleaf Club Open to New Members

The Oakleaf Club of Tidewater is open to Medical, Dental, Nurse and Medical Service Corps active and retired officers and their spouses in Hampton Roads. The club is a charitable organization benefiting the Hampton Roads naval medical community. We are happy to welcome new members.

For membership information, email tidewater.oakleaf@gmail.com.

THE COURIER

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Submissions should be in Word format, with photos submitted separately from the document and in jpeg or tiff format.

The Public Affairs Office is located in Bldg. 1, 3rd Deck, Rm. C308.

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Happy 122nd Birthday, Chiefs

The chief petty officers at Naval Medical Center Portsmouth celebrated the 122th birthday of the establishment of the CPO community with morning colors and a cake cutting April 1.

During the ceremony, deputy command master chief, Master Chief Machinist's Mate (SW/EXW) Thomas Schnapp, read the birthday message from Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy (AW/NAC) Michael D. Stevens.

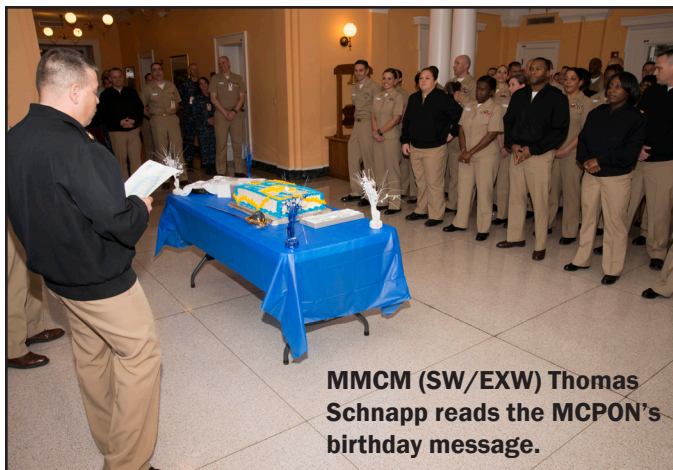
"One thing that CPOs have always excelled at, despite the challenges, is our ability to recognize and implement change," Stevens wrote. "If I could coin one word for this year's birthday theme, it would be 'progress.' Our Navy is 239 years old – could you imagine where our Navy would be without progress?"

"Without change, there is no progress," Stevens continued. "Change is not always easy, but that's OK, because hard is what we do. George Washington once said, 'The harder the conflict, the greater the triumph.' As CPOs, we have the responsibility to ensure our Navy continues to progress – we owe this to our Nation, our Navy and our people."

Then the cake was cut by the youngest chief at NMCP, HMC (SW/AW) Antoinette Saunders, and the oldest chief, Command Master Chief (SW/AW/FMF) Michael C. James of Navy Medicine East.



Photos by MCCA (IDW/EXW/AW) James Perkins



MMCM (SW/EXW) Thomas Schnapp reads the MCPON's birthday message.



A gorgeous day to celebrate a birthday and attend morning colors.



The cake was cut by the youngest chief, HMC (SW/AW) Antoinette Saunders, left, and the oldest chief, Command Master Chief (SW/AW/FMF) Michael C. James of Navy Medicine East, second from right. MMCM (SW/EXW) Thomas Schnapp and Capt. Bradford Smith, executive officer, assisted in cutting the cake.



Some of NMCP's chief petty officers celebrated with a photo in front of Bldg. 1.

4DX Summit: Directorate of Primary Care, BHC Dam Neck Surpass Goals

STORY AND PHOTOS BY
MC₂ (SW) TERAH L. BRYANT
NMCP Public Affairs

Sixteen of Naval Medical Center Portsmouth's departments and clinics presented their latest successes in reaching their Wildly Important Goals, or WIGs, during the 4DX summit April 17. Displaying each goal through posters and PowerPoint presentations, the 16 representatives tracked their successes and how to further their goals.

Through 4DX, or Four Disciplines of Execution, staff use WIGs to improve patient safety and health care outcomes. Goals are displayed in clinic spaces on posters.

During the summit, the directorates who participate in 4DX recognized their department or clinic that had made the most progress. Capt. Bradford Smith, executive officer, presented the commander's trophy to the Directorate of Primary Care for making the most improvement overall toward their goals.

The Directorate for Primary Care recognized Branch Health Clinic Dam Neck for making the most progress within the directorate.

"The presentations are awesome, as usual, and I could not be more proud of what you have accomplished," said Capt. Cynthia Kuehner, DPC director. "We may get to stand up here with the awards, but if you give it to the deckplate level, you will win every time. You guys deliver every single day, and I am honored to be your directorate leader for the last three years."

Kuehner added that she was completely blown away by what everyone has accomplished.

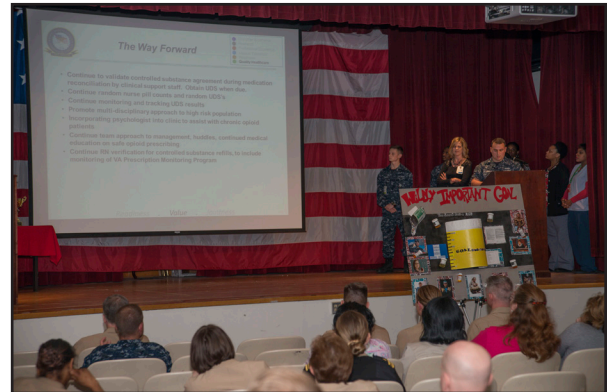
"Across the board, you are all winners, but we had to pick somebody, and we couldn't be more excited for you," said Cmdr. Kevin Brown, perspective DPC director.

During the branch health clinic's presentation, HM3 (FMF) Solomon Wallace explained that their Wildly Important Goal was to increase active duty medical readiness from 67.1 percent to 75 percent. They surpassed it.

"To ensure that medical readiness increased, all departments of the clinic

called scrubbing."

This responsibility included signing in new check-ins to the tenant commands at Dam Neck Annex, collecting their medical and dental records, and going through each record to cross referencing information between the patient's electronic health record and the Composite



HM3 Gavin Slusher of the Internal Medicine Clinic speaks to the importance of validating controlled substance agreements.

Health Care System. If discrepancies were found, the patient and their command were notified.

The medical assistants used the process to identify if active-duty patients were delinquent on health care requirements that may affect their readiness to deploy, such as immunizations or exams.

"We are able to catch more discrepancies now that we are including the Immunizations Department, because all new check-ins are required to go to immunizations," Wallace said. "With dental, we print individual medical readiness reports of future appointments, so that the medical report can be updated once they complete their dental appointment."

According to Wallace, his team stressed the importance of medical readiness to the tenant commands and attention to detail throughout the Dam Neck Clinic.

"By using this process and our resources, we have surpassed our expectations and have achieved 79.3 percent medical readiness as of April 16," Wallace said.



Representatives from Dam Neck Branch Clinic hold the plaque for best presentation for the Directorate of Primary Care and the trophy as the winning directorate for the summit.

lent a helping hand," Wallace said. "Every medical assistant who was assigned to a provider identified if the patients who had appointments the next day needed anything, which is

— See 4DX, next page

Crisis Stabilization Program Off to Steady Start

By MC₂ (SW) TERAH L. BRYANT
NMCP Public Affairs

Naval Medical Center Portsmouth's Crisis Stabilization Program has successfully completed its pilot phase and now continues to help patients as a permanent program as of April 1. Within the Directorate of Mental Health, the program saved more than \$200,000 during the pilot.

The program provides six days of intense outpatient therapy for active-duty service members. Those who are eligible have presented to the emergency room with suicidal ideations, or they have been hospitalized with an acute psychiatric crisis, but are now well enough to be discharged from the Inpatient Mental Health Ward and would benefit from continued therapy.

Program manager Lt. Cmdr. Beth-ann Vealey considers the program a step up from ER care and a step down from hospitalization, helping patients recover from a psychiatric crisis immediately and improve their ability to stabilize in a short time.

"I developed the program specific to NMCP because we frequently have patients with psychiatric crisis presenting to the emergency department, and the inpatient ward is consistently full," Vealey said. "This program offers patients who have an acute psychiatric crisis immediate access to high-quality psychiatric care and related services."

The program offers daily clinical oversight and ongoing support for six days. Multiple therapeutic interventions decreases isolation and behaviorally activates the patients, which results in the improved safety and well-being of program participants.

Data from the pilot shows the program's positive impact on patients. There was a dramatic 75 percent increase in resiliency to stress, a 55 percent decrease in functional impairment, a 30 percent decrease in depression symptoms, a 22 percent decrease in anxiety symptoms, and a 13 percent improvement in quality of sleep.

Program staff consists of five psychiatric technicians, a clinical psychologist, the program manager and a psychiatrist for five



Photo by MCCA (IDW/EXW/AW) James Perkins

Executive Officer Capt. Bradford Smith and HMCM (EXW/FMF/SW) Aaron VanDall presented members of the the Mental Health Directorate with the 2014 Vikki Garner Memorial Award for Excellence in Quality Improvement for its "Crisis Stabilization Program."

to 10 hours a week for patients who need medication. Changes during the pilot phase included the addition of art and recreation therapy, and increasing patient involvement for the psych techs.

They also streamlined the screening process for patients coming into the program after their discharge from the inpatient ward.

"They are not going through discharge and then separately screened to be in the program – we do it at the same time," Vealey said. "It creates a 'warm handoff' and coordination of care, and develops a better rapport with patients."

While half of the patients are referred by the ER and half by the inpatient ward, Vealey said the program currently has a capacity of eight patients per day, and they manage the numbers as enrollment and discharge is continuous. Prior to discharge, she sets up patients with outpatient services for continued care and to avert future crises.

"In the after-care program, patients can attend Wednesday meetings and receive ongoing support as they continue to maintain stabilization on their own," Vealey said. "We also correspond with them weekly through email for 90 days to support and encourage them to use healthy coping skills."

As Vealey developed program materials and trained technicians, she stressed the importance of treating these patients in a way that shows appreciation for those who wear the uniform. She wanted to look at fitness issues and their work environment while trying to work with people and empathize in a non-judgmental way about what it's like to be in acute psychiatric state and ask for help.

4DX — Continued from previous page

NMCP has used 4DX as a way to improve performance related to Navy Medicine's goals of readiness, value and jointness, as well as the command strategy, which includes quality health care, readiness, professional excellence, customer experience, medical education and research.

4DX is a system that helps organizations meet challenges in the implementation strategic goals. 4DX is used to enable leaders and their teams to break through to higher levels of performance by focusing on WIGs. It also establishes a standard of performance, accountability and clear measurements for team and individual performance.

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USNS Comfort Deploys for Continuing Promise 2015

By MC1 (SW) AMY KIRK
Continuing Promise 2015 Public Affairs

USNS Comfort got underway from Pier 8 at Naval Station Norfolk shortly after 9 a.m., April 1, sailing south for a six-month deployment in support of Continuing Promise 2015.

On board is a medical and hospital support staff of 700, including 431 from Naval Medical Center Portsmouth.

"Continuing Promise 2015 will enable us to strengthen ties in support of our enduring partnerships with the people of Central America, South America and the Caribbean - a partnership that will enhance our shared values, interests, and commitment to unity, security and sta-

bility within the region," said Capt. Sam Hancock, mission commander for CP-15.

CP-15 personnel will be working alongside partner nations and non-government organizations, or NGOs, to conduct civil-military operations including humanitarian assistance, providing medical, dental and veterinary care as well as engineering support and subject matter expert exchanges, known as SMEEs, to foster goodwill and build enhanced partnership capabilities.

Comfort is scheduled to conduct

mission stops in Belize, Colombia, Dominica, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Jamaica, Nicaragua and Panama.

"Some of the events that are currently planned include medical sites established at host nation stadi-

ums, hospitals and clinics; subject matter expert exchanges at various medical centers and aboard USNS Comfort; and engineering projects at schools and medical clinics," Hancock said.

Currently, personnel anticipate serving more than 130,000 patients and conducting more than 800 SMEEs that will cover medical, veterinary, engineering and environmental health topics; in addition to more than 20 engineering and building site projects that are scheduled to take place.

Comfort Arrives in Miami for Ship Tours, Liberty

Comfort stopped in Miami, April 4-6, to host various tours and a distinguished visitor luncheon prior to its first CP-15 mission stop.

The ship's Morale, Welfare and Recreation Department provided opportunities for the crew to take a tour of the Everglades, participate in a restaurant tour, or take that last trip to the store to purchase personal items.

The Comfort hosted a luncheon on board for Marine Gen. John F. Kelly, the commander of U.S. Southern Command, and for non-governmental organiza-

— See CP-15, next page

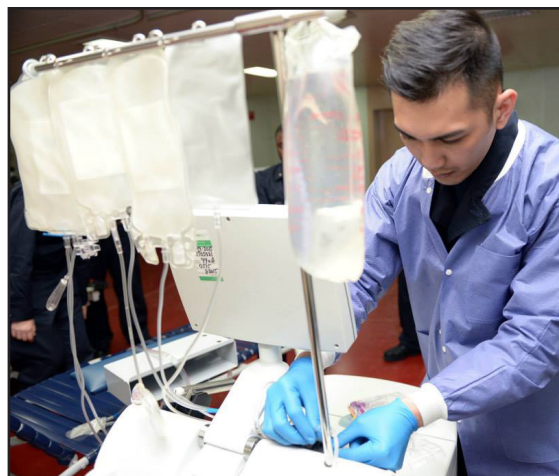


Photo by MC3 Andrew Schneider

HM3 Arwin Mejia, an NMCP blood bank lab technician, performs a blood platelet apheresis April 2 while the ship is enroute to a stop in Miami. This is the first blood platelet apheresis ever conducted aboard Comfort.



Photo by MC2 (SW) Terah Bryant

Families of NMCP staff gather at Pier 8 to watch USNS Comfort depart for CP-15.



Photo by MC2 Derek Paumen

HM3 Cleve Webb, from Branch Health Clinic Boone at JEB-Little Creek, performs a fit test with the N95 respirator mask on Lt. j.g. Danielle Ho April 7. The mask protects staff from micron particles, such as tuberculosis.



Photo by Spc. Lance Hartung

Cmdr. John Devlin, an emergency medicine doctor assigned to NMCP, works with Amelia Pinegar, a registered nurse volunteering with Latter Day Saints Charities, during a mass casualty drill April 7 in preparation for their first stop in Belize.

CP-15 — *Continued from previous page* tions participating in CP-15. The luncheon provided an opportunity for CP-15 leadership and the NGO representatives to come together prior to the first mission stop in Belize.

"This is a hugely important mission for our country," Kelly said. "Pulling the Comfort, as big as it is and as beautiful as it is, up to these countries brings a great hope to the people of the Caribbean and Latin America."

Kelly said that as wonderful as the mission is, it is the people who serve aboard the ship that provide the heart and soul.

"This includes our NGOs who will partner with ship's company to bring the miracle of medical care to that part of the world," he said.

In addition to the luncheon, the CP-15 crew provided ship tours for SOUTHCOM personnel, special guests and several local Boy Scout and Brownie troops. The tours offered guests the opportunity to see the medical treatment facility on board, including casualty receiving, operating rooms and the intensive care unit.



Photo by MC2 Derek Paumen

Cmdr. Pat Fitzpatrick, from NMCP, lectures Sailors and non-government organization volunteers during a patient assessment class at sea April 8.

Thousands Cared for in Belize

By MC1 (SW) AMY KIRK, MC1 MADDELIN ANGE BRAND
AND MC2 DEREK PAUMEN
Continuing Promise 2015 Public Affairs

USNS Comfort arrived in Belize April 9, and during its first mission stop, medical professionals worked alongside Belizean medical professionals to provide medical care at the Hattieville Government School, Independence High School and aboard Comfort April 10 – 18. The ship departed Belize April 19.

Medical site one, or M1, was set up at the Hattieville Government School, which served a total of 3,864 patients in nine days. The site consisted of several small buildings, and the majority of the patients were treated inside small classrooms. Waiting areas were set up outside to accommodate the amount of patients waiting to receive care daily.

"The front half of the site was medical specialties," explained Cmdr. John Devlin, a Naval Medical Center Portsmouth emergency medicine physician, and the officer in charge at the Hattieville Government School medical site. "We had general medicine, pediatrics and sub-specialists as well. Those sub-specialists were able to offer cardiology, gastroenterology, dermatology and physical therapy services."

Sub-specialists like X-ray and optometry presented an opportunity for the citizens to have a very specific condition or question addressed, Devlin added.

Medical site two, or M2, composed of Independence High School and the Independence Polyclinic, served 2,676 patients and

— See **BELIZE**, Page 8



Photo by MC3 Andrew Schneider

HM3 Kevin Banta, a physical therapy technician, left, and Lt. Philip Burgees, right, both of NMCP, teach a patient how to use crutches at the Independence Polyclinic in Independence, Belize, April 13.



Photo by MCSN Kameran Guy Hodnett

Lt Cmdr. Melissa Buryk, an NMCP pediatrician, checks a child's vital signs at the Hattieville Government School April 17.

BELIZE — *Continued from Page 7* was located in a remote area of Belize. Medical professionals traveled by bus for four hours to reach the site. The majority of the medical team remained overnight at the site for the duration of CP-15's mission in Belize.

"With this site being very rural, the residents have limited access to medical care," said Lt. Cmdr. Jonathan McDivitt, a cardiologist from Naval Hospital Jacksonville, Florida. "I feel like we were really able to improve the quality of life here, making diagnosis and getting people plugged back

in to see their primary care doctor."

Each medical site was organized to ensure patients were checked in properly and received the care they needed. Patients at both sites were allowed to receive one treatment per day, and in some cases were referred for surgery aboard Comfort.

"I've had a great experience in Belize," said Army Capt. Jen Masel, a resident physician of Internal Medicine, assigned to the Walter Reed National Military Medical Center in Bethesda, Maryland. "I spent a lot of time at the M1 site as a primary physician seeing patients, giving diagnosis and counseling them. There were days where I could instantly refer a patient to surgery and coordinate their

care on board the ship. So, it ended up being a very efficient way to get a lot of people the care they needed."

Comfort welcomed pre-screened patients, accompanied by one family member or escort, aboard the ship to receive surgery.

"We partnered with Carl Heusner Hospital in Belize, where many patients had already been identified for various needs by local physicians," McDivitt said. "Once it was determined that they were a good candidate for surgery, a plan would be set for them to be transported to the ship for additional screening and surgery."

In total, the CP-15 team provided primary care to more than 6,500 patients, and performed more than 400 dental exams,

more than 1,200 optometry exams and 101 surgeries.

"I liked the feeling of the camaraderie when I was at both the M1 and M2 sites," McDivitt said. "People were saying 'God bless you' and 'thank you for being here'. Overall, it was a rewarding experience."



Photo by MC2 Brittney Cannady

Cmdr. John Devlin, an emergency medicine physician, gives local volunteers a tour of a medical treatment site in Belize April 10.



Photo by MCSN Deven Leigh Ellis

Capt. George Adams, a Navy chaplain assigned to NMCP, shakes hands with Rev. Father Jerris Valentine, Belize Defense Force Padre, after discussing the implementation of a chaplain's assistant program April 16.



Photo by Army Pvt. 1st Class Tomarius Roberts

HM3 Brittany Monroe, of Branch Health Clinic Boone at JEB-Little Creek, learns a dance from a student at Holy Cross R.C. School April 13.



Photo by MCSN Kameran Guy Hodnett

Capt. Anthony Delgado, an NMCP pediatrician, checks a child's vital signs at the Hattieville Government School April 17.



Photo by MC3 Andrew Schneider

HM2 Luke Peet, a preventive medicine technician at Branch Health Clinic Boone, teaches children about proper handwashing at the Independence Polyclinic April 14.



Photo by MCSN Kameran Guy Hodnett

HN Maura Curtin, who is assigned to NMCP, cleans a window during a community relations project at the Kings Children Home April 10.

Surgeon General Visits Comfort

Comfort also welcomed several distinguished visitors aboard, including Vice Adm. Matthew L. Nathan, Navy surgeon general, and Force Master Chief Sherman Boss, Bureau of Medicine and Surgery.

Nathan and Boss visited the M1 site April 17 and were given a tour by Devlin. They also visited with Seabees of Construction Battalion Maintenance Unit 202, who were remodeling the Hattieville Seventh Day Adventist School. On April 18, Nathan spoke at the closing for the Belize visit at Fort George Memorial Park.

While embarked on board April 19 – 23, Nathan toured the ship, met with senior leadership and non-governmental organization volunteers and served lunch to junior personnel. Nathan and Boss held an all hands call April 19 for petty officer 1st classes and below, which was followed by an award ceremony. Nathan presented awards to eight Sailors, including a Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal to Culinary Specialist Seaman Cedric King of NMCP, and presided over a reenlistment ceremony.

Before departing, Nathan attended the opening ceremony for the start of CP-15 operations in Guatemala.



Photo by MC3 Andrew Schneider

HA Keone Hooker, a dermatologist assistant assigned to NMCP, wraps a patient's leg at Independence High School April 17.



Photo by MC3 Andrew Schneider

Lt. Cmdr. William Hill, an optometrist from NMCP, examines a patient's eyes at the Independence Polyclinic April 13.



Photo by MCSN Deven Leigh Ellis

Vice Adm. Matthew Nathan presents a Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Award to CSSN Cedric King during an award ceremony at sea April 21.

Chilly Temps Didn't Dampen Command Egg Hunt Spirits

About 75 children and their families braved the chilly temperatures during the Command Egg Hunt March 28. With less competition than usual, each child took away a pretty good share of candy from the 4,000 plastic eggs that lay hidden in the grass on Hospital Point.

The children also could sit with the Easter Bunny for a photo, enjoy the bounce house and craft station, or get their face painted or a balloon animal. After the egg hunt, the Easter Bunny visited 10 children who were hospitalized in the Pediatrics Ward, and gave them baskets filled with toys and candy.

The event was sponsored by the Oakleaf Club, Navy Federal Credit Union, American Red Cross, and the Chief Petty Officer, Junior Enlisted, Second Class Petty Officer and First Class Petty officer associations.



One of many groups of kids who posed with the Easter Bunny so parents could capture the moment on their cell phones.



As always, the balloon animal station is popular with the children.



Kids could select from about a dozen face painting designs.



Left, above left and above: Children in the 3 – 5 age group race for their share of 1,000 candy-filled plastic eggs.



Right: After being among the first to get his face painted, the child was one of the first to sit on the Easter Bunny's lap.



**Even the w
HN Derrick**



Several of the children from the 6 – 8 year old group eye eggs a few feet from the starting line, while others have their sights set farther away.



The 9 – 12 years olds are quick to sprint from the starting line after the tape is cut by the Easter Bunny.



Two girls in the 9 – 12 group pick up their next egg.



Taylor, 14, with the Easter Bunny before getting his basket.



At four days old, baby Everett gets his first visit from the Easter Bunny.



ward staff was excited to see the Easter Bunny. From left, Jessup, HR Hillary Couto and Ensign Marrionray Paraiso.



The Easter Bunny gets a high five from 21-month-old Mason.

Navy, Air Force Collaboration Benefits Babies, Taxpayers

By DEBORAH R. KALLGREN
NMCP Public Affairs

By combining resources in a joint initiative between Naval Medical Center Portsmouth and the 633rd Medical Group at Joint Base Langley-Eustis, more than \$1.5 million of taxpayer money has been saved in less than a year.

This joint venture means Air Force service members have Navy doctors caring for their children in an Air Force hospital, and Navy families' babies are treated by Air Force nurses in a Navy hospital.

This innovative resource-sharing project has resulted in improved patient safety, significant cost savings, and convenience to families of newborns who need neonatal intensive care.

The project is coordinated by the Tidewater enhanced Multiservice Market, or eMSM for short. In an analysis of data from October 2013 to August 2014, more than 150 acutely ill newborns were diverted to civilian hospitals due to the limited number of neonatal ICU beds within the Tidewater military health system.

For babies who are transferred out, the continuity of patient care is disrupted, risking patient safety. Families must travel to visit their newborns, who often require weeks or months of hospitalization. And sending care to a civilian hospital contributes an additional \$3 million for taxpayers.

All of these factors served as the impetus for combining resources within the eMSM. In 2013, the Defense Health Agency established six pilot joint-service eMSMs to encourage medical resource sharing. The only Navy-led market is in Tidewater, managed by Rear Adm. Terry Moulton.

The Tidewater market is composed of Navy, Air Force and Army medical assets at NMCP and Joint Base Langley-Eustis. The Tidewater eMSM serves 400,000 joint military forces in the market. Even though each facility is military, there's been a limited history of sharing assets and workload. That's now changing.

"We look at the data, and say here's a specialty area that looks like we might be able to recapture some of this care, bring it back into the (military) direct care system. In that way we save money

and provide better continuity of care for our beneficiaries," said Col. Ronald L. Johnson, Tidewater eMSM Chief Operating Officer.

That led the Tidewater eMSM to shift Navy neonatologists and pediatricians to the Langley Air Force hospital in order to create a higher level of neonatal care. The change is working.

Air Force nurses now rotate in the neonatal intensive care unit at NMCP. This has expanded neonatal care capacity at both hospitals, allowing more acutely ill babies to receive their care within the military health system and without having to be moved to another facility. In only 10 months, the diversion of care has decreased by 86 percent, saving taxpayers more than \$1.5 million.

With such a success rate in so short a period of time, the Defense Health Agency has funded the hiring of nine more neonatology staff to benefit military families in the

"We look at the data, and say here's a specialty area that looks like we might be able to recapture some of this care, bring it back into the (military) direct care system. In that way we save money and provide better continuity of care for our beneficiaries."

— Col. Ronald L. Johnson, Tidewater eMSM COO

Tidewater eMSM by adding capacity for this much needed service.

Johnson said approval and funding of the new positions were dependent on showing a return on investment, and the ROI is there: at Portsmouth and Langley.

"The additional staff expands the capability of the market. So between Langley and at Portsmouth, those assets would be used where deemed most appropriate based on the need," Johnson said.

In the meantime, the eMSM continues to analyze the data to determine savings in other areas where the services' medical assets can work jointly and maximize their value to service members and their families.



The Neonatal Intensive Care Unit at NMCP.

Photo by MC2 (SW) Terah L. Bryant



Herschel Walker chats with command leadership prior to speaking to staff in the auditorium.

NFL — Continued from Page 1

he would look around and say, “These people are crazy. I’m not like them.”

“But then I realized I was just like them – we all have problems and that’s what I try to get across to people,” Walker said. “It’s hard to talk about going to a hospital; people think there is something wrong with them.”

Walker said he is better now than he was years ago, before he sought care.

“I had everything going for me, and I thought that saying I needed help was going to totally destroy my career,” Walker said. “But it would have destroyed me worse if I had killed my wife. That’s what I try to explain. It’s got nothing to do with what people think of you, but how are you going to be if you do something to a loved one.”

According to Walker, everyone has

mental health problems at some time in their life. They should not think there is something wrong with them just because they are struggling. “If you were ok once, you’re ok now,” he said. “You just left the house with the ‘wrong hat’ on.

“You have to work and stay with it during treatment and afterwards,” Walker said. “Some nights you may think you can’t make it, but you can. Continue to get up and work.”

Walker attended the University of Georgia, earning the 1982 Heisman Trophy in his junior year and setting 30 all-time Georgia records before leaving for the United

States Football League and initially played for the Dallas Cowboys.



Herschel Walker autographs a Dallas Cowboys helmet for AOCs (AW/SW) Darron Finley.

He moved to the Minnesota Vikings in 1989, the Philadelphia Eagles in 1992 and returned to the Dallas Cowboys in 1996. He retired in 1997 as one of the top running backs with a total of 8,225 yards and 61 rushing touchdowns.

Herschel Walker greets a member of NMCP staff during the autograph signing after he spoke to hundreds of staff.



Photos by MC2 (SW) Terah L. Bryant

NMCP Presented 'What We Carry' Program to Remember Holocaust, Honor Survivors

STORY AND PHOTOS BY
MC₂(SW) KATHRYN WROBEL
NMCP Public Affairs

Naval Medical Center Portsmouth's Diversity Committee held a Holocaust remembrance ceremony April 21 to commemorate the victims, celebrate the survivors and honor their courage and strength.

The theme of this year's program was "What We Carry," and included a multi-media presentation designed to forever preserve the voices and firsthand accounts of four local Holocaust survivors. The program featured guest speaker and Holocaust survivor Dana Cohen by showing the portion of the "What We Carry" film focusing on Cohen's story and conducting a question and answer session afterward.

"We commemorate all victims of the Holocaust, pledging never to forget," said Capt. Darin K. Via, commanding officer, quoting President Barack Obama's remarks from Holocaust Remembrance Day, April 16. "Today we come together and commit to the millions of murdered souls and survivors that it must never happen again."

Narrating the ceremony was Marty Mandelberg, a volunteer docent from the Jewish Federation of Tidewater's Holocaust Commission.

"The main purpose of the Holocaust Commission is education," said Mandelberg. "Our goal is not only to educate about the Holocaust, but also to encourage you to think about the consequences of prejudice and indifference – perhaps the greatest threat to our civilization."



Dana Cohen answers questions from members of the audience.

"You are very fortunate to hear from one of our survivors today because you are part of one of the last generations to be able to hear these stories firsthand," continued Mandelberg. "Firsthand accounts of this time period are the heart and soul of understanding this unimaginable kind of tragedy."

Between showing segments of the film featuring Cohen, Mandelberg provided additional details of Cohen's life and the horrific situations she

— See **HOLOCAUST**, next page



Dana Cohen watches as Wendy Auerbach presents memorabilia from Dana's life during the Holocaust.

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"I'm excited for the patients," Vealey said. "Within a week, they can go from being suicidal to feeling so much better, understanding how they began to develop those ideations, resolving feelings and being excited to go back to a work environment."

During the pilot, Mental Health Directorate staff supported Vealey's vision for the program.

"They have just been remarkable; they are open to learning and they ask questions," Vealey said. "I've had good input from staff on ways we can modify based on experiences in the ward."

To Vealey, it was exciting to conceptualize this program in theory, develop a standard operating procedure, and then watch it come to fruition.

"I am so incredibly fortunate to be given the opportunity to design and implement the program and to work with such a great team," Vealey said. "Staff has stepped up to the plate for the program, and the quality of clinical services we've been providing is really remarkable."

She credits part of the program's success with trying to see things from the viewpoint of patients.

"I developed and worked the program with the thought that if I were the person on the other side of the table needing ser-

vices, how would I want to be treated and what would benefit me most," she said. "I don't think people choose to be in a crisis state. Being in the military, it can be difficult to ask for help, because we want to feel like we can take care of own problems and focus on the job at hand. It takes a lot of courage to ask for help, and we try to honor our patients by how we work with them."

The Directorate of Mental Health won NMCP's Vikki Garner Memorial Award for Excellence in Quality Improvement March 19 for the Crisis Stabilization Program.

Vikki Garner Memorial Award

The Vikki Garner Memorial Award for Excellence in Quality Improvement is awarded annually to an individual or a team that identifies a significant quality improvement opportunity and implements an innovative solution which improves the quality of care. The award recognizes achievements that will have a long-lasting impact on reaching the goal of improving the quality of care and promoting a culture of patient safety throughout the command.

HOLOCAUST — Continued from previous page

endured. In describing the events that Cohen had undergone, Mandelberg noted that Cohen's survival, as written by Cohen's mother, could be described only as "one long chain of miracles."

Joining Mandelberg from the Jewish Federation of Tidewater's Holocaust Commission was volunteer docent Wendy Auerbach. Auerbach presented several artifacts and memorabilia commemorating Cohen's journey of surviving the Holocaust. These items included a suitcase, clothing from her childhood, photos, items from the time period, a

ration card and a newspaper.

Following the presentation, Cohen took questions from audience members. During this time, she spoke about her life after the Holocaust, her experiences in various parts of the world, what it was like learning several languages, and coming to the United States to start her family.

"What does it mean to be a survivor?" asked Cohen. "I never believed in being a sacrificial lamb. To survive, I think you use your wits, you use your gut... you can go through a lot and still be a decent human being."

The film "What We Carry" was produced by Janice Engel Amber Howell in 2010.



Audience members view the Holocaust memorabilia following the program.



Dana Cohen greets audience members after the program.

NEC Fair Showcases Corpsmen Specialties

Naval Medical Center Portsmouth staff held the semi-annual Navy Enlisted Classification Fair at the medical center March 27 to promote and educate patients and staff about the different specialties available within the corpsman community. The fair included 25 tables with displays representing 48 NECs, 35 of them for corpsman. Most of the additional NECs were from the Submarine Force.

During the fair, the displays were judged by MMCM (SW/EXW) Thomas Schnapp, deputy command master chief, and first through third place winners were recognized during an award ceremony. The Special Amphibious Reconnaissance Corpsman (NEC 8427/8403) received first place, Advanced X-ray Technician (NEC 8452) was awarded second; and third went to Advanced Biomedical Equipment Technician (NEC 8478).

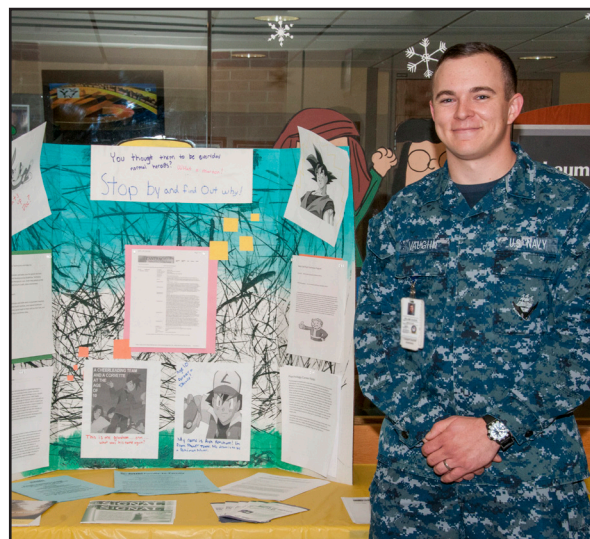


Photos by MCSN Juan A. Salinas-León

HN Sara Ellis with the Hemodialysis Technician's (NEC 8434) display.



HM2 Darryl Davis and HN Shevalier Swanson with the Dental Technician's (NEC 8701) display.



HN Alex Vaughn with the Psychiatric Technician's (NEC 8485) display.



MMCM Thomas Schnapp, deputy command master chief, checks out the Special Amphibious Reconnaissance Corpsman's (NEC 8427/8403) display.



HMC Dexter Raysor accepts an award for the Special Amphibious Reconnaissance Corpsman's (NEC 8427/8403) display from MMCM (SW/EXW) Thomas Schnapp, deputy command master chief.



Photo by MCSN Juan A. Salinas-León

Civilians of the Year

The Civilians of the Year were recognized during a ceremony March 31, by Capt. Darin Via, NMCP commanding officer, who presented them with certificates.

Recognized were, from left, Marilyn Fowler, medical assistant, Category I Clinical; Natarsha Webb, medical support technician supervisor, Category I Administrative; Dr. Sarah Bisch, child psychiatrist, Category II Clinical; and Christopher Jones, Industrial Hygiene Department head, Category II Administrative.

Officers of the Year

The Officers of the Year were recognized March 25 by Capt. Darin Via, commanding officer, who presented them with Navy Achievement Medals and command coins.



Photo by MC2 (SW) Kathryn Wrobel

The Officers of the Year gather after the ceremony. Front row, from left: Master Chief Hospital Corpsman (EXW/FMF/SW) Aaron B. VanDall, Cmdr. Thomas A. Pluim II, Lt. j.g. Akakpossa B. Ananou, Lt. Cmdr. Josephine C. Fajardo, Lt. j.g. Sheila A. O'Connor, Capt. Darin K. Via.

Back row, from left: Lt. Cmdr. Kevin S. Koehler, Lt. Cmdr. Laleh Abdolazadeh, Lt. Cmdr. Misty D. Scheel, Cmdr. Nima A. Khorassani and Capt. Bradford L. Smith.



**Tornado Season is March through August.
Hurricane season begins in June.**

**www.ready.gov/build-a-kit
www.ready.gov/make-a-plan**

Emergencies happen, often with little or no notice.
By taking action beforehand, you can be prepared for any emergency.

Civilian in the Spotlight

Tarnisha R. Brown

Hometown: Chesterfield, Va.

Years of service: 8.5 years as a civilian, all at NMCP (8 years prior active duty as an Army combat medic)

Job: Health technician (hearing conservation technician)

What do you like most about your job? I enjoy working on the audio van and supporting the fleet by bringing our services to them.

What do you do in your off-duty time/hobbies? Working out, bowling, fishing and playing drums and bass guitar.

Favorite movie: The Color Purple

Favorite food: Pizza

Why is she nominated as Civilian in the Spotlight? “Ms. Brown is the epitome of a team player,” said Senior Chief Machinists Mate (SW/EXW) Aaron Mingle, Directorate for Public Health Services senior enlisted leader. “Working in hearing conservation, her main location is on a Mobile Occupational Hearing Audiometric truck, where she leads the team four days a week in bringing hearing conservation to commands of all services throughout Hampton Roads. Her hard work and dedication to hearing conservation assists with ensuring all members are audiotologically ready for deployment. She is professional with each patient, taking the time to certify the results, educate them on hazardous noise, discuss hearing test results and explain the how and the why to wearing proper hearing protection.”



Photos by MC2 (SW) Terah L. Bryant



Sailor in the Spotlight

HM3 Bradley Hubbell

Hometown: Destin, Fla.

Years of service: 3 years (7 months at NMCP)

Job: Deployability Clinic corpsman

What do you like most about your job? Constant learning/process improvement. I enjoy coming to work and making every day better than the last.

What do you do in your off-duty time/hobbies? Hiking, fishing and spending time with my family.

Favorite movie: Big Hero 6

Favorite food: Fried sweet potatoes

Anything else interesting about yourself that you would like to tell us? Why was he nominated as Sailor in the Spotlight? “HM3 Hubbell is extremely motivated and has been a key player in the establishment of the Deployability Clinic,” said Chief Hospital Corpsman (SW/AW) Sharon Halliday, deployability clinic leading chief petty officer. “Utilizing his hard work ethic, he enables our newly formed clinic to meet the standards of a fully functional clinic in a short period of time. As our departmental customer service representative, he provides feedback

to comments, ensuring that each customer is addressed and proper follow-up is completed to ensure customer satisfaction. Hubbell is currently taking college classes to pursue his career as a future physician’s assistant.”

Annual Research Competition Poster Session

Naval Medical Center Portsmouth held the 30th Annual Navy Medicine East Academic Research Competition poster session March 27. The findings of 98 researchers covering 33 studies were presented by a representative of each research group. Each presentation was followed by a question-and-answer session, allowing the judges to inquire more about the topic of research. Three panels with four or five members judged the presentations based on the strategic imperatives of Readiness, Value and Jointness.



Lt. Jennifer Ottino presents the case report “Diffuse Bilateral Pseudoangiomatous Stromal Hyperplasia: A Rare Manifestation of a Benign Breast Disease,” for which she teamed up Cmdr. Tara Wilson.



Capt. Bradford L. Smith, executive officer, right, and Capt. William A. Beckman, director for Professional Education, second from right, attend the presentation by Air Force Maj. Dalila Lewis. The case report “Time Is of the Essence: A Case for Early Recognition of Temporal Lobe Tumor in Patients with Olfactory Aura,” was completed by Lt. Sandra Ogletree and Lewis.

Right: Lt. Brendan Jones presents “Pediatric Jejunal Perforation of Unknown Etiology: Case Report and Literature Review.” Capt. Bradford L. Smith joined the judges in viewing the presentation. Cmdr. Robert Ricca and Lt. Cmdr. Ryan Restrepo and Jones completed the case report.



Photos by MC2 (SW) Kathryn Wrobel

Lt. Cmdr. Jeffrey M. Carness presents the case report “Unexplained Intraoperative Lactic Acidemia in a Patient with Pancreatic Head Adenocarcinoma Undergoing Pancreaticoduodenectomy (Whipple Procedure): Case Report.” He worked on the project with Lt. Cmdr. Brett W. Haake.



Lt. Jonathan Melzer presents “Congenital Hairy Polyp of the Eustachian Tube: Surgical Management of a Rare Clinical Entity.” Ensign Austin Morgan, David Darrow and Melzer worked on the project.



SHIPMATE OF THE MONTH



Photo by MCSN Juan A. Salinas-León

HM3 JEREMY ANDREWS, DMH
HN JAMES ALLEN ARTHUR, DMS
HM3 AMBER BRACE, DPC
HN MARK RYAN CARIGO, DSS
HN DAVID CASTRO, DCSS

CTR2 MICHELLE RAE HIETT, DPE
RPSA KALEB I. PHILLIPS, COMMAND SUITE
HN ASIA ROSS, DPHS
HN KAN WANG, DNS
HM3 BRANDON WICKER, DFA

MENTOR OF THE MONTH

Hospital Corpsman 1st Class (SW/AW) Sonia Strickland is the leading petty officer for the Directorate for Clinical Support Services and the enlisted assistant to the DCSS senior enlisted advisor.

She manages the administrative aspects of the DCSS office, and has been stationed at Naval Medical Center Portsmouth since November 2013.

As a mentor, she feels the program is important because it allows a Sailor to pay forward personal and professional experiences and achievements to help others become successful and well-rounded.

"The Mentorship Program creates an environment of trust and open communication, providing Sailors that comfort to know they have someone to go to for guidance," Strickland said.

Strickland mentors three individuals and contributes to the program by simply being a mentor, taking pride in that title.

"Being a mentor builds your leadership, improves your communication skills, helps you to learn new perspectives, advances your career and adds personal satisfaction," Strickland said. "For the protégé, they gain valuable advice, develop their knowledge and skills, and improve their communication, and it helps to build their network."

Strickland became a mentor because she didn't have one until late in her career.

"This caused me to be behind in my development as a well-rounded Sailor," she said. "I didn't want other Sailors

to struggle like I did. I want them to become successful earlier in their careers so they can pay it forward."

Helping Sailors set and achieve personal and professional goals and knowing she may have played a part in their success is what motivates her.

Lead by example is the advice Strickland offers other mentors.

"It's important as a mentor to check yourself before you can check anyone else," Strickland said. "Be willing to share your experiences. As mentors, we wear many different hats to help and guide our protégés, but it is amazing what we can learn from them if we take the time to listen and humble ourselves."

Would you like to become a mentor or find a mentor? Check out the Mentor Program on the Intranet to find valuable information about mentoring at NMCP. Go to the directory website map and look under "M" to learn more and join the Mentor Program today. Everyone is welcome.



Photo by MC2 (SW) Terah L. Bryant